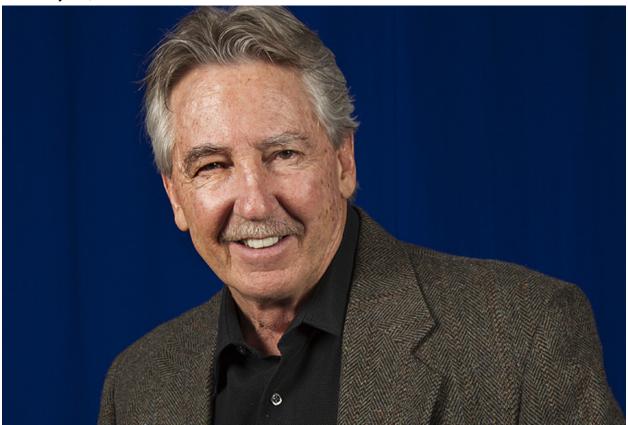# Biosurveillance panel to address essential science for public health

February 17, 2014

Symposium at AAAS Chicago conference on the 'Interface of Biological, Physical, and Information Sciences' for biosurveillance

LOS ALAMOS, N.M., Feb. 17, 2014—A team of national experts across varied disciplines will be gathering Feb. 17 in Chicago, prepared to explore the most critical aspects of international disease awareness.

Convened during the [American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)](#) annual meeting, its organizer Basil Swanson of Los Alamos National Laboratory noted, "It is absolutely essential that nations are able to quickly detect and characterize a biological threat affecting human, animal or agricultural health. Thus the need to gather

these internationally recognized specialists and explore potential pathways for scientific advancement."

He said, "Detection and characterization enables lives to be saved and offers improved outcomes in various scenarios such as the purposeful release of a biothreat agent, an emerging infectious disease outbreak, pandemic, environmental disaster, or food-borne illness."

In July 2012 President Obama signed the first ever National Strategy for Biosurveillance that builds from existing capabilities and galvanizes U.S. efforts to identify and understand biological threats.

Although focused on disease and pathogen surveillance in the continental U.S., the strategy recognizes the global importance of biosurveillance. The ultimate goal of the U.S. biosurveillance enterprise is the continuous collection and synergistic analysis of data from many disparate sources and the dissemination of actionable information followed by timely decision-making.

The symposium, "Bio-Surveillance: The Interface of Biological, Physical, and Information Sciences," discusses current U.S. and international disease surveillance approaches and the three critical challenges of improved diagnostics, predictive and epidemiological modeling and data integration and analysis for decision support. Speakers will discuss the innovation and discovery needed to realize a successful bio-surveillance enterprise capable of capturing early warning signs and guiding public health decisions.

When: Monday, 17 February 2014: 9:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Central TimeWhere: Hyatt Regency Chicago, Grand Ballroom FRegistration: See the AAAS conference web site for media access, AAAS conference web site for media access

Biosurveillance symposium speakers:

Jason J. Paragas, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory Science and Technology Challenges to Realize the National Biosurveillance Strategy

Alina Deshpande, Los Alamos National Laboratory Selecting Essential Information for Biosurveillance

Chris Dye, World Health Organization (WHO) Surveillance by WHO: What, When, How and Why?

David Walt, Tufts University Present Capabilities and Future Prospects for Bio-Surveillance Diagnostics

Malik Peiris, University of Hong Kong Zoonotic Diseases and Global Viral Pandemics